

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Congresswoman Loretta Sanchez (CA-47), Vice Chair of the House Homeland Security Committee, today voted to give Orange County law enforcement more discretion in deciding how to spend millions of dollars in critical Homeland Security funding. H.R. 5562, the Homeland Security Grant Management Improvement Act, would loosen the rigid requirements placed on grants like the Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI), which provides funding to organizations and communities at risk of a terrorist attack. The bill would ensure that local law enforcement and first responders, *not* Washington bureaucrats, have more input in the way UASI grants are spent. The bill was marked-up and approved by voice vote in the House Homeland Security Committee earlier today.

“I am committed to providing Orange County police officers, fire fighters, and first responders with the resources they need to keep our community safe,” said Rep. Sanchez. “But we’re currently attaching too many strings to these resources. Local law enforcement officers, not Homeland Security bureaucrats, know how to best protect our community from potential threats. We should trust them to make some important spending decisions.”

In addition to easing the Department of Homeland Security’s (DHS) strict grant requirements, H.R. 5562 would also reevaluate current limits on the amount of funding that can be spent on management and administration expenses (such as office supplies and miscellaneous items). Finally, the bill requires the Federal Emergency Management Agency to evaluate the feasibility of issuing multi-year program guidance for the State Homeland Security Grant Program, which includes UASI grants.